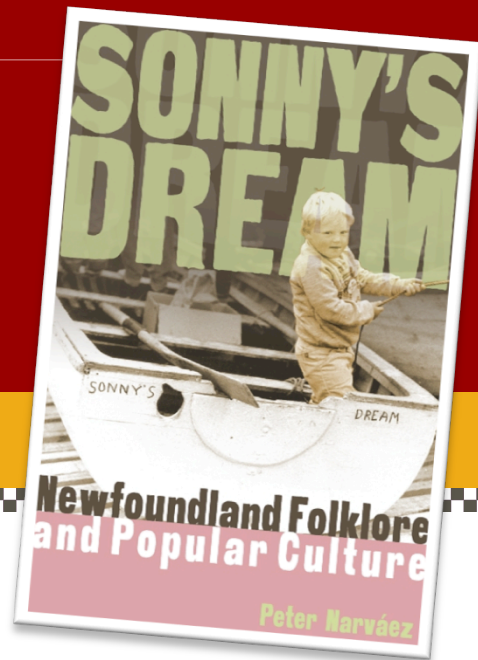


Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

News and notes on
Newfoundland and Labrador's
Intangible Cultural
Heritage Program

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NL Folklore & Culture Book Launch

On January 25th, Memorial University's Department of Folklore will be hosting the the launch of Dr. Peter Narváez book *Sonny's Dream: Essays on Newfoundland Folklore and Popular Culture*. Dr. Narváez, a long-time supporter of the folklore and traditional music scene in Newfoundland, passed away in 2011.

In *Sonny's Dream: Essays on Newfoundland Folklore and Popular Culture*, the Department of Folklore presents updated versions of fifteen of folklorist Peter Narváez's most important essays. Although most of the articles were published earlier, colleagues in Folklore and Music felt that they should be more accessible and proposed the book as a kind of *festschrift* in his honour. Narváez agreed to the project and revised the articles to give the book an updated perspective.

Sonny's Dream represents a lifetime of fruitful scholarship, bringing together Peter Narváez's influential work in folk narrative, custom, vernacular music and popular culture. Narváez was an eclectic scholar; he brought new perspectives to old topics from fairytale and Irish wakes, at the same time he pushed disciplinary boundaries in his examinations of occupational folklore within white colour contexts and musical responses to the cod moratorium. Some of his work, such as his early treatments of popular culture and his coining of the term "vernacular song," was pioneering. All of Narváez's essays investigate folklore's intersections with class, hegemony, and nostalgia. This will be an important collection not only for students of folklore but anyone interested in Newfoundland and Labrador's cultural life.

WHEN: January 25th, 2012

TIME: 7:00 PM

WHERE: Bitters Pub, Feild Hall, Memorial University

FREE PARKING IS AVAILABLE IN AREAS 62 AND 19.

For directions please consult the campus map located at http://www.mun.ca/campus_map/index.php.

The Christmas Hobby Horse Revival in Newfoundland and Labrador

By Dale Jarvis, ICH Development Officer

The poster to the right was one designed by Target Marketing for the 2011 Mummers Festival. It bears the caption "Terrifying and delighting children for over 400 years" and the image of a handsome mummer (yours truly) peeking out from inside a great grey horse's head.

This is a hobby horse - and not the child's riding toy hobby horse most North Americans are familiar with. The hobby horse of Newfoundland's mummering tradition is much more fearsome beastie, with big eyes, and a wooden jaw with nails for teeth, which snock together as it nips and bites at the people it meets along its route. It is an archetypal figure associated with chaos, unpredictability, fertility, and, as the poster suggests, even a little terror.

When the ICH office started planning the very first mummers festival in 2009, we went looking for hobby horses. Chris Brookes, who started the Mummers Troupe in 1972, had a couple, one of which, "Old Ball" is shown below. Local actor Andy Jones had one. One was found tucked away in the MUN Folklore and Language Archive. The Kelly family in Cape Broyle had another, made of styrofoam to replace an older, wooden head.

But other than those few models, very few existed outside of reminiscences. Andrea O'Brien contributed memories of hobby horses from the Southern Shore, and a man from Bonavista Bay remembered a hobby horse made out of an old cardboard beer carton.

The hobby horse was a Newfoundland Christmas tradition which, not particularly widespread in the twentieth century, had seemed to have faded from both the cultural landscape and popular memory in the twenty-first. It was a shame, for hobby horses have a long and complicated history. Hobby horses (along with their colourful cousins hobby cows, hobby goats, hobby sheep, and hobby bulls) have been here on the island of Newfoundland for a long time. In 1583 Sir Humphrey Gilbert wrote in his "Voyages and Enterprises":

Besides for solace of our people, and allurement of the Savages, we were provided of Musike in good variety: not omitting the least toyes, as Morris dancers, Hobby horse, and Maylike conceits to delight the Savage people.



"Hobby horse" and "Horsy-hops" both get their own entries in the Dictionary of Newfoundland English, and folklorist Dr. Joy Fraser has included references to hobby horses in her stellar research on mummering and violence in nineteenth century Newfoundland. Fraser includes one account, where a complainant in a legal case describes how "I heard some person running and turned round I was struck on the head with something like a horses head and knocked down I rose on my knees to get hold of the man who struck me and he kicked me on the breast".

Folklore research in the 1960s and 1970s uncovered many stories and references to hobby horses and bulls, but by the time the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador instigated its first Folklife Festival in 2009, very few

hobby horses existed, no one had made any for years, and most people had never heard of the tradition.

Mummers Festival coordinator Ryan Davis, working with long-time Lantern Festival organizer Kathleen Parewick, designed a cardboard template to make a hobby horse head, and the hobby horse workshops which were first offered in 2009 have since become a firm part of the annual festival.





The hobby horse workshops have been taught outside of the festival, as part of ICH workshops, community centre outreach programs, and workshops for high school teachers. The photo to the left was made as part of a workshop at the MacMorran Community Centre in 2011.

Ron Delaney of Bay Roberts has made his own hobby horse from wood, based on his own memories. In December of 2011, Delaney wrote,

"As a child , growing up in the 70's and early 80's I was mortified of Jannies, I use to hear my relatives talk about good and bad Jannies , as a result , in my mind they were all bad, especially the hobby horse. The hobby horse usually was the last Jannie to enter the house; I could remember scooting in the room as fast as I could when I heard the SLAP of its mouth."

One of the participants in a hobby horse building workshop I taught in Bay Roberts, Delaney brought along Meggie and Kaegan, who now represent a new generation of hobby horse owners. Another horse foaled that day made its way back to Ontario, to take place of honour as Bottom's Head in a Grade 8 student production of Midsummer's Night Dream.

One of the participants in a 2011 Arts Work Conference hobby horse making workshop I taught in St. John's was teacher Amanda Gibson, who teaches at Amos Comenius Memorial School in Hopedale. She made her hobby horse, then went off to Labrador armed with her new skills. Horses not being common along the northern Labrador coast, Gibson adapted the template, after I shared with her how Kathleen Parewick had made a hobby polar bear for the first Mummers Parade.

"The kids had a fun time making them and loved choosing the colors for their 'bears'" she writes. "It took a few hour-period classes, but it was a great way to end the unit in Grade 8 NL history on 19th Century Lifestyles for students that are hands-on learners."



In 2011, there were hobby horses galore at the Mummers Parade. Everywhere you turned, a gaudily-decorated horse's head was poking up above the sea of mummers and janneys, including one devilishly fine, black and red steed, crepe paper fire billowing from its nostrils.

For me, it was a particularly moving sight, and proof that tradition is sometimes more resilient than we give it credit for. For whatever reason, hobby horse making has struck a chord with a new generation of janneys, and I look forward to new additions to the herd in 2012. And next year, I think the parade needs at least one hobby goat...



New Folklore Co-op Student

Memorial University's Department of Folklore has a new Public Folklore MA program, which includes two semesters of co-op placements for graduate students. The ICH program has been a sponsor of the program since its inception last year, and we have a new graduate student working with us for the next three months: Nicole Penney.

"My love of folklore began when I took my first folklore course, folk 1000, in my second semester of my undergraduate degree at Memorial University. After my second course, when I did my first oral history with my grandfather, I was hooked. After completing my bachelor's degree in folklore and English literature, I enrolled in the new public folklore masters program offered at MUN. While completing my programs I worked on several projects including the digitization project of collector's cards at the Dictionary of Newfoundland English, and "Airs Apart", an exhibit which promoted and educated the public about archiving. My favorite areas of folklore are occupational folklore, particularly the folklore of lumber camps in rural Newfoundland, and language and play (specifically slang and occupational jargon). In my spare time I collect books and old multi-media equipment such as still cameras, video cameras, and sound devices such as record players and phonographs." – Nicole Penney



Basket Project Update

One of the traditions we are currently researching and documenting is basket making. We are interested in photographing as many old Newfoundland and Labrador made baskets as we can, and doing interviews with people who remember basket makers, mill lunch baskets, spruce root baskets, egg collecting baskets, or baskets used in the fisheries. Below are two very different examples of basket making. On the left, an undated traditional woven trout basket, owned by Rennie Sullivan of Pouch Cove; and, on the right, a woven bassinet dated to 1959, made by the CNIB, and owned by Frances Barnable of Mount Pearl. If you have a basket to share, contact Nicole at 1-888-739-1892 ext 3 or email ich@heritagefoundation.ca.

